

I am a former customer of Comcast, and I definitely feel that some of their practices are suspicious, possibly illegal and most definitely poor practice for a business that should be serving customers.

I was a customer from 2000-2005. I work in IT support so I would often need to work with computers at work from home, reach some of my resources at home from work or transfer large files back and forth. I signed up with Comcast because of the promised speed. It started at 10Mb costing about \$40 a month. Towards the end of my term with them, it had been reduced to 3Mb and was costing \$55 a month. I could understand if service improved, speeds increased or connectivity was more consistent for the increase, but the service actually became worse over time.

When I first signed up I wanted to attach my file server (Windows 2000 server at the time) as my primary connection to Comcast. I intended to share this connection with the other PCs on my network at home to maximize the internet connectivity. I was immediately told I could not attach a machine with a server OS on it to their network. It did not matter that I had business reasons for it or simply that it was more practical for my situation. I was told flatly “no.” I therefore resigned to attaching it to my personal workstation running Windows Professional 2000. I was further told that if I wanted to attach other computers in my house, I would have to purchase additional connection outlets and cable modems and pay the same price for each computer. Completely and totally ridiculous from a consumer point of view.

The technician did a decent job of installing the Comcast software and getting my computer connected to the internet and mail servers. As I learned more about networking in my business, I discovered this software and the requirement to have the cable modem connected only to a workstation was completely unnecessary. I think newer ISPs are more honest with their customers now and simply provide the connection into the house with a switch so customers can attach whatever machines they wish. All the ISP cares about, or should care about, is how much bandwidth and throughput are used.

My Comcast service began having issues almost immediately and continued through the five years of my business with them. I only stayed with them because there were no better offerings for comparable speed when it did work. At random times during the day or night, the service would suddenly stop working. The modem showed no signs of issue (power, local connection) only that the internet connection was gone. This would occur once or twice a week on a regular basis. Sometimes it only lasted five minutes, sometimes it lasted for three hours and one time it lasted for two and a half days. When I would call for customer service, once I could get through the hold music/menu

(usually 10-20 minutes), speak with a first level technician and appease them with multiple reboots of my system for no good reason and to no avail, I would sometimes get to a support engineer who could tell me that an outage was occurring, an upgrade was occurring or there was no apparent problem from their end. Regardless, I was without service.

After a few years my modem apparently developed a fault in its power connection, likely from the surges and drops it was experiencing from the network. Even though I was quite confident the modem was faulty, I refused to schedule a technician to visit my house. Per the support person over the phone, if the technician found no fault in their network or the modem, then I would be charged at least \$75 for the house call. Having dealt with Comcast for several years by this time, I completely mistrusted them and any of their employees. I was quite certain that the technician would do anything and everything in his power to prove that the fault was not Comcast's but mine in some way.

While I never experienced any restricted access to specific websites or applications, I did receive a warning that my average monthly usage was higher than Comcast liked (throughput limitations were not mentioned in my agreement) and that if I exceeded their limit, my service would be discontinued until the next billing cycle. I found this completely outrageous because I monitored my usage and knew that I was not using as much throughput as they claimed. Threatening to discontinue a service for which I was paying was idiotic. Why not try to sell me more bandwidth to meet my needs?

All in all, Comcast has demonstrated very poor business practices and should be thoroughly investigated for any and all suspicious behavior.